2003/04 EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Prepared for:

ALBERTA LEARNING

Prepared by:

ENVIRONICS

RESEARCH GROUP

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For more information contact:

Performance Measurement and Reporting Branch
Alberta Learning
9th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 – 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5

Telephone: (780) 427-8217
Fax: (780) 422-5255
Email: measurement.learning@gov.ab.ca

To be connected toll-free call 310-0000.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alberta Learning 2003/04 Employer Satisfaction Survey was conducted between November 13 and December 3, 2003. The objective of the survey was to assess employer satisfaction with recent graduates from Alberta's learning system in the areas of academic and technical skills, non-subject specific attributes, as well as employer satisfaction with the overall responsiveness of Alberta's learning system to their human resource needs.

The 2003 survey examined attitudes toward graduates who have received a high school diploma only, or a post secondary diploma, certificate or degree within the last two years. The 2003 survey was expanded to include employer satisfaction with recent apprenticeship graduates (i.e., Journeyman certificate holders).

The 2003 survey also included the Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills 2000+ to assess employer perceptions of the non-subject specific skills and attributes of recent graduates.

Interviews were completed with 2,000 Alberta employers. The results and survey methodology used are accurate within +/- 2.2% (19 times in 20).

Key Findings

Presence of Recent Graduates:

38% of Alberta employers have hired recent graduates from Alberta's learning system.

- The majority (62%) of Alberta employers who have recent graduates on staff employ high school only graduates. Nearly all (92%) employers in Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services and most (76%) of those in Retail Trade have hired recent high school only graduates. Recent apprenticeship graduates are employed by less than one-third (27%) of employers.

Employers are unable to fill manual labour jobs.

- Among those employers not currently employing recent graduates, nearly one-quarter have been looking to do so in the last two years. These employers have wanted to fill manual labour positions, office jobs, and technical/professional positions.

- Some employers (31%) perceive that recent graduates are not interested in the jobs available and are finding that they are not applying for them.

- Employers in Education Services, Health/Social Services, and Government Services have been wanting to fill positions with recent degree graduates but have been unable to do so, suggesting that they are having some difficulty hiring this type of graduate.

Satisfaction with Alberta's Learning System and Its Graduates:

Overall satisfaction with recent graduates, among Alberta employers, continues to be high (89%).

- Employers (72% overall) generally agree that Alberta's learning system provides an adequate supply of various graduate types, with the exception of those from apprenticeship programs (58%).

- Employers (78% overall) also agree that graduates are provided with appropriate skills, except in the case of high school only graduates (59%).

- Alberta employers are generally satisfied with non-subject specific skills and attributes of recent degree, diploma, apprenticeship, and certificate graduates but are not nearly as satisfied with those having high school only. In particular, high school only graduates rate much lower than other types on ability to communicate in speech and writing, ability to think and solve problems, and taking ownership of work. They also receive low ratings in terms of being able to manage information and to use numbers.

The higher the level of education, the more satisfied employers are with non-subject specific skills and personal qualities.

- Recent degree graduates, compared to other types, receive more ratings of "very satisfied" among those who employ them.

- Alberta employers are more satisfied with degree, diploma, apprenticeship, and certificate graduates than with high school only graduates in terms of their combination of skills and knowledge, their ability to learn at work, and their ability to learn throughout their lifetime.

Perceived Skills Shortage and Assistance for Education and Training:

Many employers do not perceive a skills shortage.

- Over one-third of Alberta employers currently employing recent graduates of Alberta's learning system do not perceive a skills shortage. However, others suggest problem areas such as a lack of language skills (communication and writing skills) (20%) and math skills (7%).

Employers are increasingly providing assistance to employees for the purpose of education and training in Alberta's learning system (46% in 1999, 49% in 2001, and 55% in 2003).

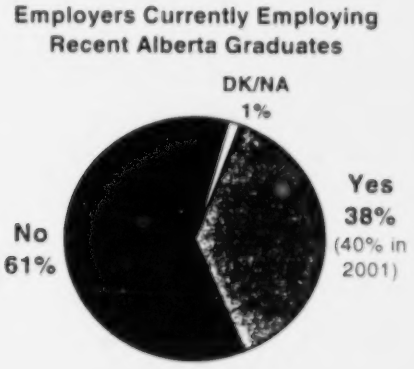
- Unpaid time away from work continues to be more popular than financial assistance. The latter is more likely to be provided to employees in Finance/Insurance/Real Estate, Government Services, and Business Services.

I. MEETING ALBERTA EMPLOYERS' DEMANDS

Employment of Recent Graduates

38% of Alberta employers currently employ recent graduates of Alberta's learning system.

Of the 2000 employers surveyed, 38% have employees who have graduated from Alberta's learning system in the last two years. This includes those with high school only, a certificate, a journeyman's certificate, a diploma, or a degree.



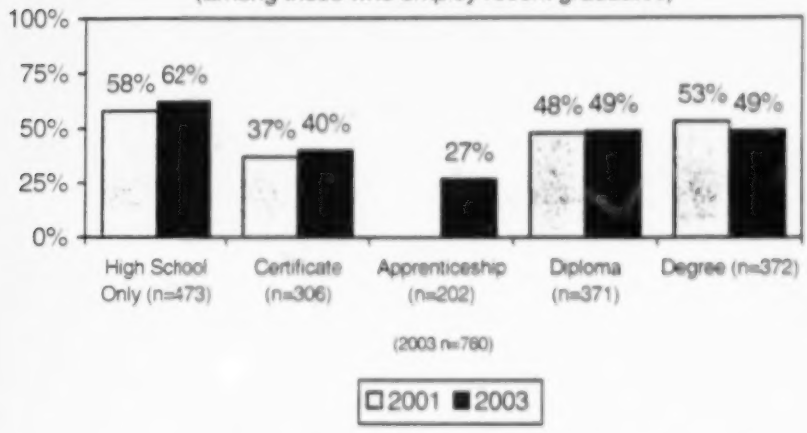
As in 2001, differences exist in company size, region and industry.

- Almost two-thirds (62%) of companies with 20 or more employees have recent graduates on staff.
- Compared to other regions, fewer employers in Rural North have recent graduates on staff (31%).
- Employers in Education Services and in Health/Social Services (48% each) continue to be more likely to employ recent graduates of Alberta's learning system while those in Finance/Insurance/Real Estate are less likely, at 28%.

The majority (62%) of Alberta employers who have recent graduates on staff employ high school only graduates. Recent apprenticeship graduates are employed by less than one-third (27%) of employers surveyed.

Types of Graduates Hired

(among those who employ recent graduates)



NOTE: Numbers add to more than 100% as employers may employ more than one type of recent graduate.

Industry is a key determinant of types of recent graduates hired.

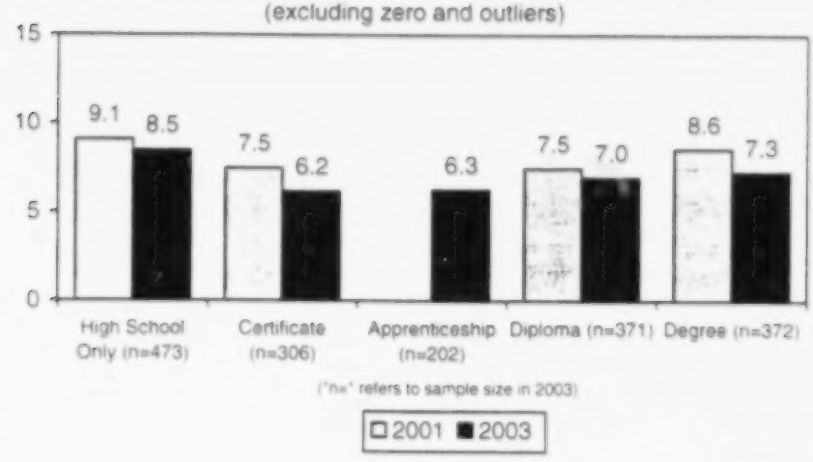
- 92% of employers in Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services and 76% in Retail Trade have hired recent high school only graduates.
- Employers in Finance/Insurance/Real Estate (69%) and in Health/Social Services (62%) are more apt to employ recent diploma graduates.
- Employers in Education Services (90%), Finance/Insurance/Real Estate (72%), and Business Services (63%) are more likely to have recent degree graduates on staff.

Employers of high school only graduates tend to hire more of this type of graduates, on average, than employers of any other graduate type.

- Those who employ recent high school only graduates currently have an average of 9 of this type on staff.
- Employers of certificate and of apprenticeship graduates each employ an average of 6.
- Degree and diploma graduate employers each have an average of 7 working for them.

Average Number of Recent Graduates On Staff

(excluding zero and outliers)



There are notable regional and industry differences in the average number of each graduate type on staff.

- High school only graduates are over-represented in Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services and in Health/Social Services (averages of 12 and 13, respectively).
- Recent degree graduates are under-represented in Central Alberta (4, on average) and Rural Alberta (3) while employers in Education Services and in Health/Social Services have, on average, more of this type of graduate on staff (10 and 9, respectively).
- On average, employers in Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services, Agriculture/Primary Industry, and Education Services tend to have more recent diploma graduates on staff than other industries do (averages of 10, 12, and 10 on staff, respectively).

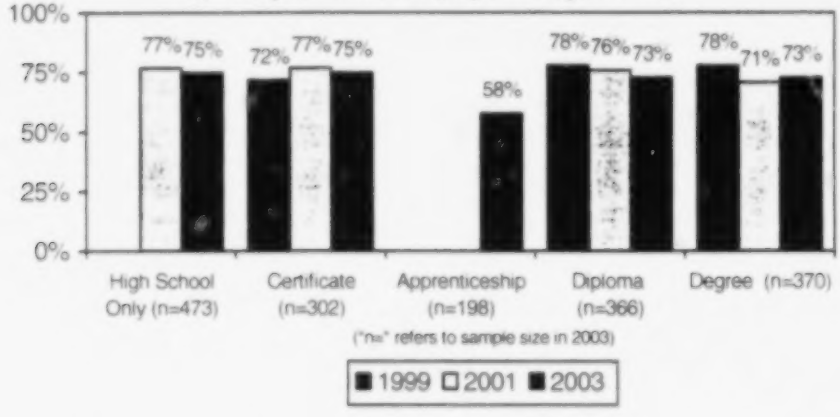
Responsiveness of Alberta's Learning System

Overall (72%, on average), employers of recent graduates agree that Alberta's learning system provides an adequate supply of high school only, certificate, diploma, apprenticeship and degree graduates and that these graduate types are provided with appropriate skills.

As in 2001, approximately three-quarters of employers of recent high school only, certificate, diploma, and degree graduates agree that Alberta's learning system provides an adequate supply of these types of graduates. 58% of those who have apprenticeship graduates on staff agree that there is an adequate supply of them.

Providing an Adequate Supply of Graduates

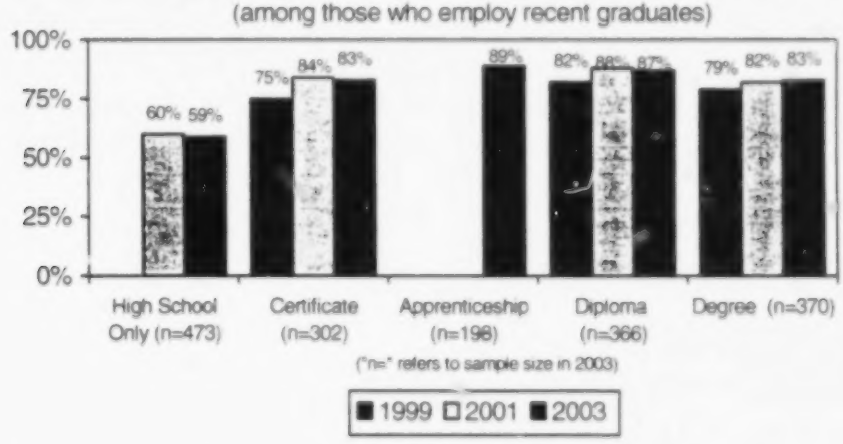
(among those who employ recent graduates)



Among Alberta employers of recent graduates, there is a high level of agreement (78% overall, 83% for certificate, 89% for apprenticeship, 87% for diploma, and 83% for degree) that Alberta's learning system provides these graduates with appropriate skills. However, consistent with 2001 results, this does not apply to high school only graduates (59%).

Providing Graduates with Appropriate Skills

(among those who employ recent graduates)



- Most employers (89%) who have hired recent apprenticeship graduates agree that this type of graduate has been provided appropriate skills.

- Agreement among employers of diploma, certificate, and degree graduates is also high when asked if each of these graduates have been provided with appropriate skills (87%, 83%, and 83%, respectively).

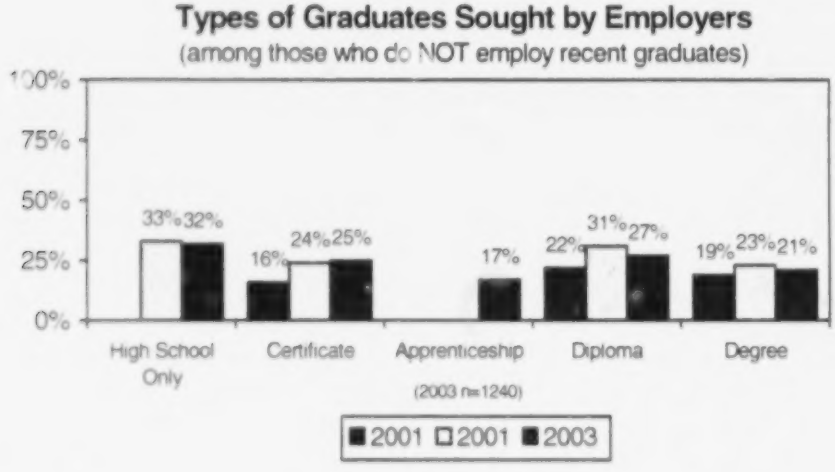
- Only 59% of employers who have hired recent high school only graduates agree that they are provided with appropriate skills.

In contrast to 2001 results, there were not any notable regional differences.

Perceived Shortages

Employers who do not currently employ recent graduates were asked if they had been looking to hire certain types of graduates in the last two years.

Among employers <u>not</u> currently employing recent Alberta graduates, approximately one-quarter have been looking to hire them.



One-third (32%) have been hoping to hire high school only graduates while 27% have been looking for diploma graduates and 25% for certificate graduates. Slightly fewer employers want to hire recent degree graduates (21%). Apprenticeship graduates are the least sought after, with only 17% looking to hire them.

There does not appear to be a relationship between region and the desire to hire certain graduate types. However, there are some notable differences with respect to industry.

- More employers (who do not currently employ recent graduates) in the areas of Education Services (50%), Health/Social Services (36%), and Government Services (36%) have been looking for, but unable to hire, recent degree graduates.

- A higher percentage of employers in the Construction industry (36%) have been looking but unable to hire recent apprenticeship graduates. This is consistent with the finding that only 58% of employers agree that there is an adequate supply of this type of graduate.

Positions to be Filled

Manual labour jobs are the top positions that employers want to fill with recent graduates but are unable to do so.

The most common type of position that employers are looking to fill, but are unable to do so, are manual labour jobs (44%), followed by office jobs (34%), technical/professional positions (31%), and those in the area of sales/marketing/retail (19%).

- As expected, available manual labour positions are over-represented in the Construction (85%), Manufacturing (80%), and Agriculture/Primary (70%) industries.

- 64% of Finance/Insurance/Real Estate employers and 60% of Government Services employers looking to hire recent graduates have wanted to fill office jobs.

- Most (93%) of the employers surveyed in Education Services who have wanted to hire graduates have been hoping to fill technical/professional positions (mostly as teachers and teachers' aides) – more than in any other industry. Roughly two-thirds (67%) of Health/Social Services employers unable but wanting to hire graduates have been looking to fill technical/professional positions.

Reasons Graduates Were Not Hired

Alberta employers who have wanted to hire recent graduates report a lack of interest on the part of graduates as a top reason for not being able to hire them.

Almost two-thirds (31%, up from 22% in 2001) of employers indicate that they have not hired recent graduates because these graduates are not interested and/or have not applied for available positions. This is higher for those in Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services (49%) and in Retail Trade (42%).

Other reasons given for being unable to hire recent graduates include graduates not being qualified (12%) and not having enough experience (12%).

Identification of Skills Shortages Among Recent Graduates

Employers who currently have recent Alberta graduates on staff were asked to identify particular skills/abilities that are missing from these graduates.

Over one-third (39%) of these Alberta employers report that there are no particular skills/abilities missing from recent graduates (consistent with 2001 results).

Among employers who have recent graduates working for them and can identify a lack of skills/abilities, 20% mention language skills (i.e., communication and writing skills) as a trouble-spot. Other problem areas include a lack of practical experience/job knowledge/specialization (8%), math skills (7%), work ethics (6%), and initiative/motivation (5%).

These perceived skill shortages are consistent across region and industry.

Final Comments About Recent Graduates

All 2000 Alberta employers surveyed were asked if they had any other comments they would like to make about recent graduates of Alberta's learning system.

About two-thirds (65%) did not raise any particular concerns.

Overall, comments offered in 2003 mirror those provided in 2001, with the exception of poor English skills, which was not mentioned previously but topped the list of comments this year.

Final Comments	Total
None	**65%**
Poor English skills (writing, spelling, grammar)	5%
Satisfactory/they are doing a good job	4%
Lack practical experience/knowledge/training	4%
Lack the ability to calculate	3%
More apparent/co-op programs/technical education needed	3%
Poor work ethics	2%
Lack of initiative/motivation	2%
Graduates are well-equipped/trained well	2%
Not enough graduates in various industries	2%
Pay expectations are too high	2%
Very poor life skills	2%
Communication/social skills need improvement	2%
Poor working attitude	2%
Education should be more relevant to business	2%

NOTE: Mentions below 2% are not listed.

II. SATISFACTION WITH GRADUATES AND ALBERTA'S LEARNING SYSTEM

Satisfaction with Non-Subject Specific Skills and Personal Qualities

Respondents who currently employ recent Alberta graduates were asked to rate them on the following list of skills and personal qualities:

- Ability to communicate in speech and writingAbility to manage information from a variety of areasAbillity to use numbers to decide what is required for the job
- Ability to think and solve problems
- Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours
- Being responsible for work and accountable for actions
- Being adaptable – ability to work as an individual or within a team
- Ability to learn continuously
- Ability to work safely
- Ability to work with others towards a common goal
- Ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks

In general, the higher the level of education, the more likely employers are to be satisfied with their non-subject specific skills and personal qualities.

Overall, employers of recent degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship graduates are more satisfied with these graduate types than employers of high school only graduates.

- Satisfaction ratings for recent degree graduates, among those who employ them, range from 88% on ability to use numbers to 95% on ability to learn continuously.

- Satisfaction ratings for recent diploma graduates, among those who employ them, range from 85% for speech and writing and the ability to use numbers to 93% on ability to learn continuously.

- The proportion of employers satisfied with the non-subject specific skills of certificate graduates is between 81% on speech and writing and 92% on working with others.

- The proportion of employers satisfied with the non-subject specific skills of apprenticeship graduates is between 74% for speech and writing and 91% for working with others.

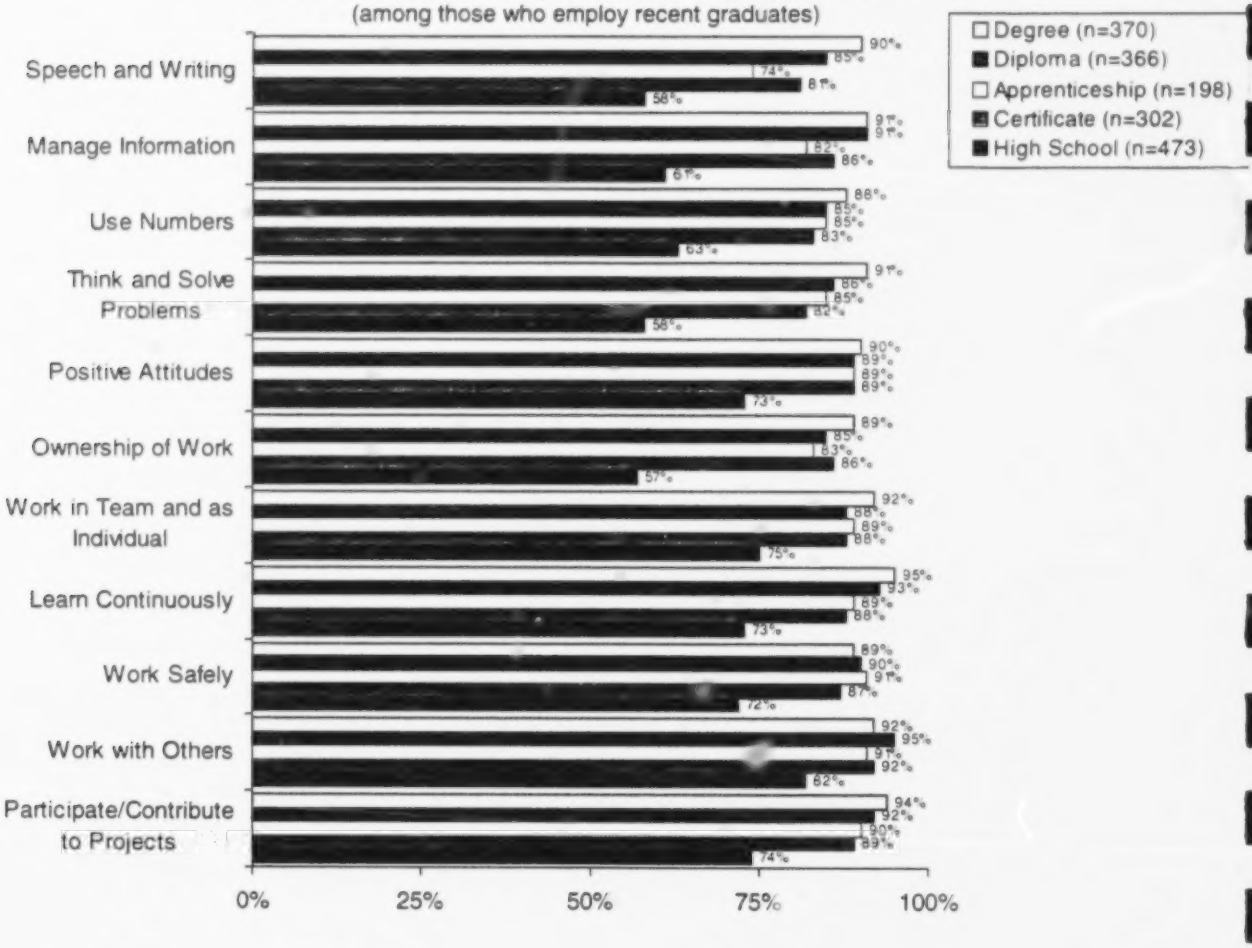
- Although recent degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship graduates receive similar satisfaction ratings (i.e., "very satisfied" *or* "satisfied"), degree graduates have higher ratings of "very satisfied".

- Recent high school only graduates receive comparatively lower ratings on all attributes, but especially on ability to communicate in speech and writing (58%), ability to think and solve problems (58%), and taking ownership of work (57%). Employers are also less satisfied with high school only graduates' ability to manage information (61%) and use numbers (63%). These results are similar to those in 2001.

- Satisfaction with apprenticeship graduates is comparable to that with degree, diploma, and certificate graduates, with the exception of ability to communicate in speech and writing (74%), which is somewhat lower than the rating for degree, diploma, and certificate graduates.

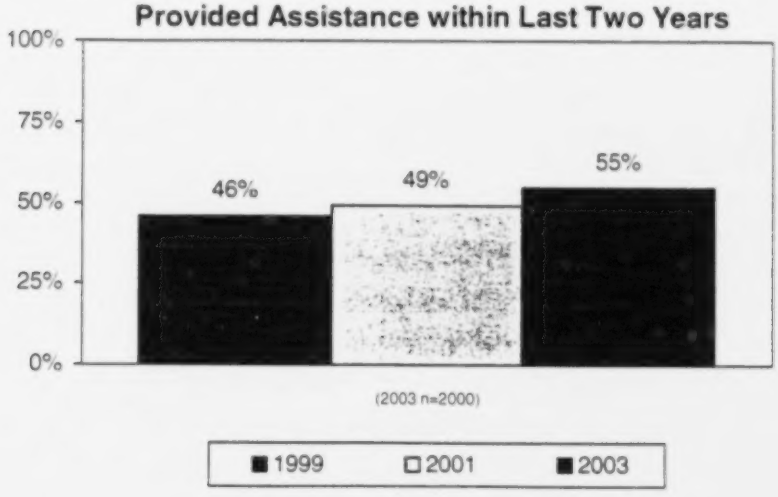
- Satisfaction ratings do not vary significantly with respect to company size, industry, or region.

Satisfaction With Non-Subject Specific Skills and Attributes
(among those who employ recent graduates)



III. ARE ALBERTA EMPLOYERS ENCOURAGING THEIR EMPLOYEES TO LEARN CONTINUOUSLY?

Over half (55%) of all Alberta employers surveyed have provided assistance to employees for education or training in Alberta's learning system in the last two years.



Assistance provided to employees for the purpose of education or training is up from 49% in 2001 to 55% in 2003.

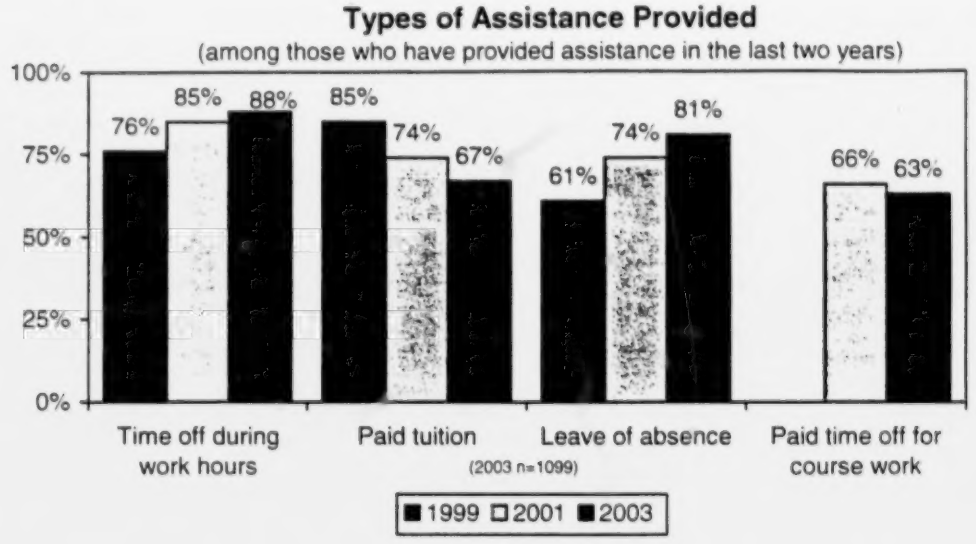
- The percentage providing assistance is higher for those who employ recent graduates of all types, especially apprenticeship (89%) and certificate (85%) holders.

- The majority of employers in Government Services, Education Services, and Heath/Social Services have assisted employees with education or training (71%, 68%, and 66%, respectively).

- Fewer employers in Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services (42%) and Retail Trade (44%) have provided assistance to employees for the purpose of education or training in Alberta's learning system.

Types of Assistance Provided

Providing time off during work hours and leaves of absence are the most popular forms of assistance provided to employees for education and training.



Among employers who have provided assistance to employees, 88% have provided time off during work hours and 81% have allowed leaves of absence. Financial assistance is offered by fewer employers, with 63% providing paid time off for course work and 67% paying tuition. Compared to 2001 results, paid tuition as a form of assistance is down slightly from 74% and leaves of absence are up from 74%.

Nearly all employers of apprenticeship graduates (93%) have provided leaves of absence. When it comes to paying employees' tuition, more employers in Finance/Insurance/Real Estate, Government Services, and Business Services have done so (87%, 86%, and 81%, respectively).

IV. OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF ALBERTA'S LEARNING SYSTEM

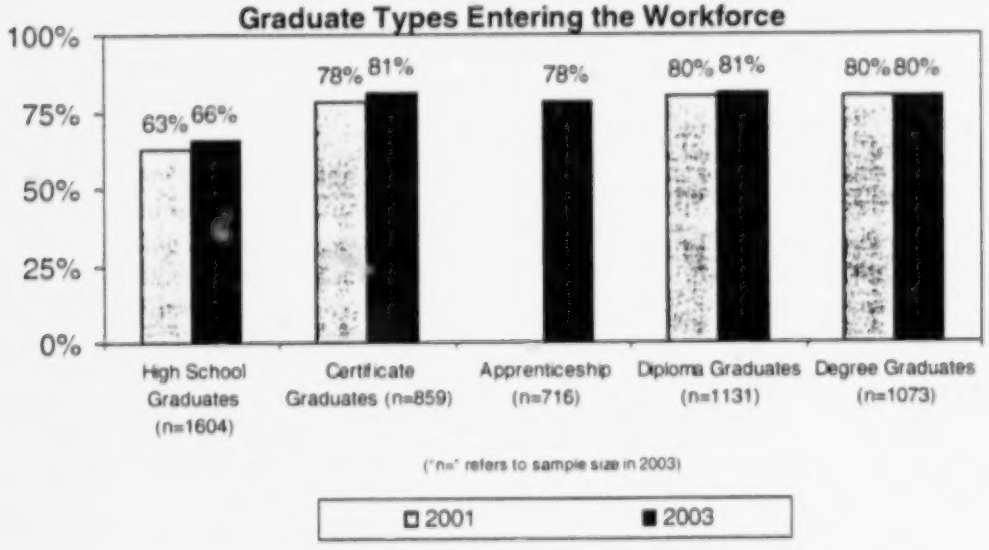
All employers surveyed were asked about their opinions of Alberta graduates in general. They were asked to rate their satisfaction with each type of graduate of Alberta's learning system that they employ. Specifically, they were asked about:

- Graduates entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge
- Graduates demonstrating the ability to learn at work
- Graduates having the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self-confidence, and the ability to access learning opportunities

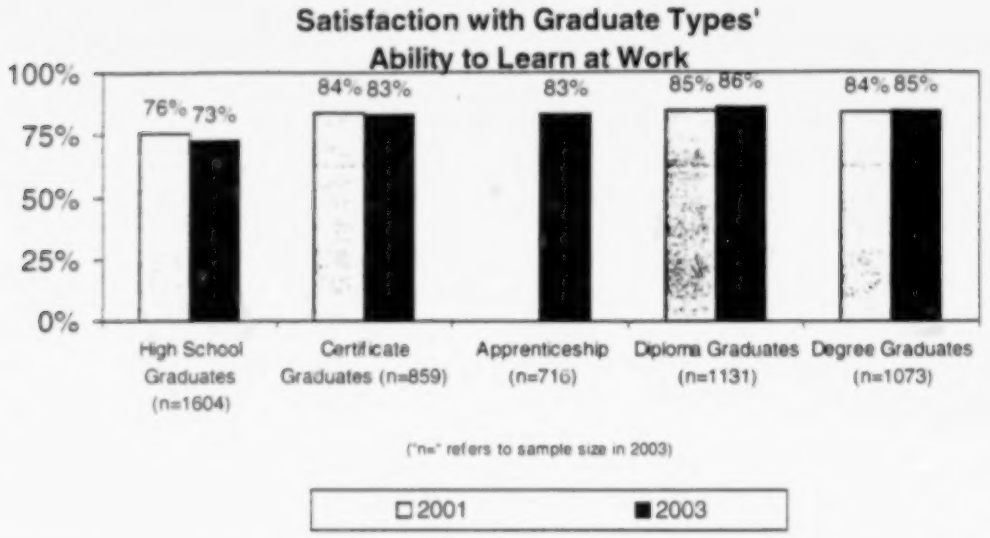
Degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship graduates receive higher ratings among those who employ them than high school only. These ratings are similar across regions and industries.

Overall, approximately 76% are very satisfied or satisfied that high school, degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship graduates are entering the workforce with the appropriate combination of skills and knowledge.

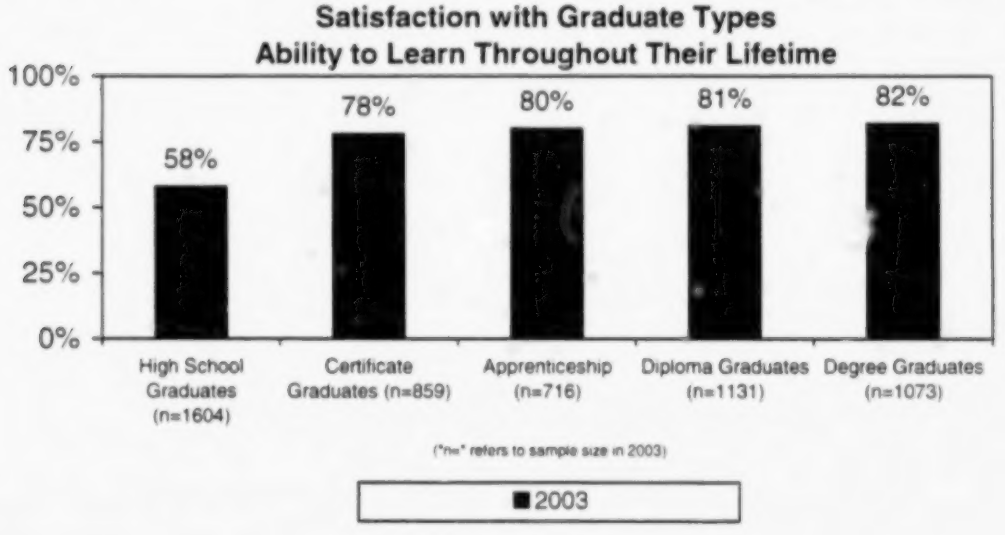
Satisfaction with Skills and Knowledge of Graduate Types Entering the Workforce



Overall, roughly 81% are satisfied that high school, degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work (73% for high school only graduates).



Around 80% are satisfied that degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship graduates have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, compared to 58% for high school only graduates.

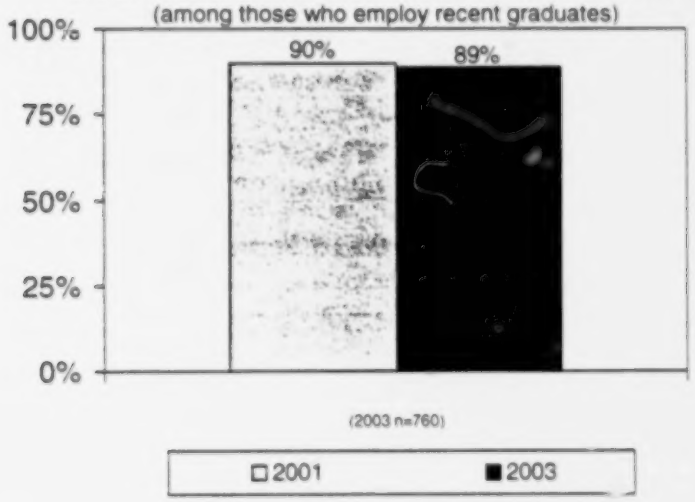


Alberta employers continue to be satisfied overall with the recent graduates that they have on staff.

89% of employers report being either very satisfied or satisfied with the skills and quality of work of the recent graduates they employ.

This level of satisfaction is consistent across regions and industries, with the exception of Accommodation/Food and Beverage Services. Employers in this industry are less satisfied overall (74%).

OVERALL Satisfaction With Recent Graduates



APPENDIX A: RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Project Objectives

Environics Research Group was retained by Alberta Learning to conduct the 2003 Employer Satisfaction Survey that was administered between November 13 and December 3, 2003. The survey was designed by Environics Research Group and Alberta Learning to measure employer satisfaction with recent graduates from Alberta's learning system. This study is based on Goal 2 in Alberta Learning's *Business Plan 2003/04* "Excellence in Learner Outcomes".

The objectives of this study are to determine if Alberta employers are:

- Satisfied with the academic and technical skills acquired by recent graduates (having graduated in the last two years) through Alberta's learning system.
- Satisfied with the non-subject specific attributes (such as communication, problem solving and contextual appraisal skills) of recent graduates hired.
- Satisfied with the overall responsiveness of Alberta Learning to their human resource needs.

In addition to information related to these objectives, this survey sought to explore whether employers have been providing assistance for training in Alberta's learning system; the numbers of recent graduates working for employers; positions available for recent graduates; perceived skills shortages; and reasons for why recent graduates have not been hired.

Modifications

In 2003, the geographic regions surveyed in the Employer Satisfaction Survey were altered slightly to be in line with current Census data – specifically, Grand Center was removed and substituted with Brooks and Cold Lake. Geographical regions included: Calgary, Edmonton, and Northern, Central, and Southern Alberta. The regions of Northern, Central and Southern Alberta included the following:

- Northern Alberta consisted of employers from northern rural areas and the small cities of Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, and Cold Lake.
- Central Alberta consisted of employers from central rural areas and the small cities of Red Deer, Camrose, Lloydminister, and Wetaskiwin.
- Southern Alberta consisted of employers from southern rural areas and the small cities of Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Brooks.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology

In order to avoid problems with representation and randomization, a single sample source was used in the 2003 survey. The results are based on a probability sample of 20,000 businesses located in Alberta drawn entirely at random through the use of CD-Rom. The phone numbers were then loaded into the Computer Assisted Interview (CATI) System, which allows for the collection of data from multiple respondents in a timely and efficient manner. The table below indicates the response rate and the breakdown of each phone number contacted. Based on a ratio of 10:1, 20,000 business phone numbers achieved 2000 completed interviews.

Statistical Reliability of Results

A sample of 20,000 businesses within the population produced results (2000 completes) that are reliable to within plus or minus 2.2%, 19 times in 20.

Timing

The average time to complete an interview was 17 minutes for those employers indicating they had hired recent graduates, and 11 minutes for those who had not.

Multiple Respondents

Due to the design of the questionnaire, it was possible to have multiple respondents from a single employer. This means that more than one respondent could be involved in completing the survey if the initial respondent did not have sufficient knowledge to answer all of the questions asked. The human resource manager was determined to be the best qualified to provide employer information regarding hiring practices, but may not have been best qualified to answer specific questions regarding employees. If the human resources manager was not able to answer these types of questions, we asked to speak to a more qualified respondent within their company (i.e., supervisor of a recent graduate). Of the 2000 completed interviews, 19 had multiple respondents.

Pre-Test Evaluation

The pre-test was based on the format and flow of the 2001 survey. The pre-test took place on November 13, 2003. As the survey tool had been used previously, a minimal amount of testing was required. There were no significant modifications as a result of the pre-test.

Businesses Contacted

The full survey administration began on November 13, 2003 and continued until December 3, 2003. Table A indicates the response rate and the breakdown of each phone number contacted. Based on a ratio of 10:1, 20,000 business phone numbers were sufficient to achieve 2000 completed interviews. Outstanding call backs were contacted a minimum of 4 times.

TABLE A. Use of Project Sample

	Number	% of Total
TOTAL SAMPLE USED	**19999**	**100%**
Non-Valid Sample	**2547**	**13%**
VALID SAMPLE	**17452**	**87%**
Sample Not Contacted	9075	45%
* Busy	178	1%
* No Answer	1063	5%
* Answer Machine	201	1%
* Callbacks pending	1708	9%
SAMPLE CONTACTED	**8377**	**42%**
Non-cooperatives	5120	26%
* Refusal	5017	25%
* Terminanted	93	0.5%
Cooperative Sample	3257	16%
Completes	2000	10%
Incomplete	1257	6%
Non-qualified (Screener A)	1257	6%

Telephone Interviewing, Quality Control & CATI Programming

Field supervisors were present at all times to ensure accurate interviewing and recording of responses. A minimum of 10 percent of each interviewer's work was unobtrusively monitored for quality control in accordance with the standards set by the Canadian Association of Marketing Research Organizations (CAMRO). Through survey design and interview monitoring, it was assured that the responses provided by employers were of the highest quality.

Definitions of Program Graduates

Recent graduates from Alberta's learning system were defined as those who have graduated within the last two years. The categories are:

- High school diploma only graduates – graduates from an Alberta high school
- Certificate graduates – graduates from an Alberta post-secondary institution (typically up to a 1 year program)
- Employees who have competed an apprenticeship program
- Diploma graduates – graduates from an Alberta post-secondary institution (typically a 2 year program)
- Degree graduates – graduates from an Alberta post-secondary institution (typically from a university)

Analysis

For the purposes of this report, first-level data analysis includes presentation of descriptive statistics (frequencies) for survey items in text, tables, and figures, as appropriate. The following should be noted with regard to the presentation of frequency data:

- Many items on the survey use four-point response scales including "very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied" or "strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree," etc., depending on the question. Although not asked, "don't know/not applicable" and "no response" (refusals) were recorded as well. Results presented in this report may represent percentages for each of the individual options in a response scale *or* the combined percentages of respondents who reported "very satisfied/satisfied" or "strongly agree/agree." Thus, in the body of the report, *overall* or *total* satisfaction or agreement refers to these combined percentages, whereas results pertaining to individual response-scale categories are specified separately in the text.
- Percentages are based on all responses for each item (i.e., "don't know/not applicable" and "no response" are included in the calculations). For all items, the "don't know/not applicable" and "no response" categories are combined into one category called "DK/NA/NR." When applicable, the specific percentages of "don't know/not applicable" vs. "no response" are specified in the text.
- All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number based on computer-generated analysis. For single response items, percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding. Similarly, rounded percentages for

individual response options may not total exactly to combined percentages due to rounding.

- In the case of multiple response items for which participants could provide more than one response, percentages are expressed in terms of the number of respondents, and, as a result, percentages total to more than 100% for these variables.

FIRMOGRAPHICS

760 employers indicated they currently employ recent graduates of Alberta's learning system. Employers could have hired more than one graduate and more than one graduate type.

- 473 currently employ at least one recent high school graduate (62%)
- 306 currently employ at least one recent certificate graduate (40%)
- 202 currently employ at least one recent apprenticeship graduate (27%)
- 371 currently employ at least one recent diploma graduate (49%)
- 372 currently employ at least one recent degree graduate (49%)

Table B displays the distribution of the employer samples interviewed for both the 2001 and 2003 surveys. It shows the business size, geographic location and industry sector of employers interviewed.

TABLE B. Distribution of Employer Sample

	2001	2003
Business Size:		
1-4 employees	23.6%	23.8%
5-9 employees	23.7%	25.2%
10-19 employees	18.1%	17.4%
20 or more employees	34.4%	33.6%
Don't Know/No Response	0%	0%
Geographic Location:		
Edmonton	23.7%	22.0%
Calgary	25.9%	18.5%
Northern Alberta	18.9%	20.2%
Central Alberta	15.2%	19.4%
Southern Alberta	16.3%	20.0%
Industry Sector:		
Retail Trade	19.0%	19.6%
Business Services	9.7%	9.8%
Agriculture/Primary Industry	11.4%	9.5%
Accommodation/Food & Beverage	7.7%	8.9%
Health and Social Services	9.9%	8.8%
Education Services	7.7%	8.1%
Construction	5.0%	6.9%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	6.1%	6.9%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	4.6%	5.7%
Other Services	4.4%	5.6%
Manufacturing	5.1%	4.3%
Government Services	6.4%	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	2.2%	2.6%

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY – 2003
Final
Alberta Learning

PROJECT # 03-248

INTRODUCTION

Initial Introduction:
Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling from Environics Research Group, on behalf of Alberta Learning. I would like to speak to the most senior person responsible for human resources and staffing. Could you tell me who that would be? Could I please speak to him/her? Thank you.

IF ASKED FOR MORE INFORMATION, ADD:
Alberta Learning is a provincial government department overseeing all levels of education in the province (Education services for K-12, post-secondary, and industry/apprenticeship training). I work for Environics Research Group, a research company in Calgary.

_____ (Record Name of Contact Person and set up a call back time if they are currently unavailable)

Once contact has been made:
Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of Alberta Learning – a provincial government department overseeing all levels of education in the province. I work for Environics Research Group, a research company in Calgary. We are conducting a study of employers throughout the province to gauge their opinions about how well Alberta's learning system is preparing its graduates for employment. The study should only take about 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. Can I complete the survey with you now?

1 – Yes	**CONTINUE**
2 – No	**ARRANGE CONVENIENT CALLBACK/ REINTRODUCE YOURSELF IF NECESSARY**

All information will be held in strict confidence and is protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Results will be reported in a combined response form only.

FIRMOGRAPHICS

I would like to begin by asking you some general questions about your company.

A. How many people does your company employ in Alberta (including yourself)?

1 – Sole proprietorship (no employees) **THANK AND TERMINATE AS NON-QUALIFIED**
2 – Other organisation type (i.e. – non profit with volunteers only) **THANK AND TERMINATE AS NON-QUALIFIED**

3 - I__I__I employees

B. What type of industry is your company in?

Interviewer's Note: If unsure about classification, capture detail in "other" to be coded later.

1 – Accommodation, Food and Beverage
2 – Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
3 – Mining, Oil & Gas
4 – Contract Construction
5 – Manufacturing
6 – Transportation & Utilities
7 – Wholesale Trade
8 – Retail
9 – Finance, Insurance & Real Estate
10 – Health Services
11 – Public Administration
12 – Business Services
13 – Education services
14 – Health & social services
15 – Communications
16 – Other (specify) _____

C. I am now going to ask you about the education levels of employees in your company. We are only interested in graduates from **Alberta** and their **highest** level of education. Could you tell me if you have any employees (including yourself) with the following education levels:

Interviewer's Note: This question is meant to ask about people's HIGHEST education level.

a) Employees with a high school diploma only – having graduated from an **Alberta** high school

1 – Yes **VERIFY** No employees with (hs only/deg/dip/cert/apprenticeship ticket/less than hs)
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

Programmers Note: Anytime a respondent would like to be refreshed regarding exactly what type of graduate is which, use these as definitions and make available throughout the survey

b) Employees with a degree – having graduated from an **Alberta** post-secondary institution (typically from a university)
c) Employees with a post-secondary diploma – having graduated from an **Alberta** post-secondary institution (typically a 2 year program)
d) Employees with a certificate – having graduated from an **Alberta** post-secondary institution (typically up to a 1 year program)
e) Employees who have completed an apprenticeship program
f) Employees with less than high school

I'd now like to ask you a few questions about the qualities of your employees and the education they have received.

1E. Graduates from Alberta's learning system will have either a high school diploma only or a post-secondary education. Post-secondary education entails graduates with a degree, diploma, certificate or apprenticeship ticket from an **Alberta** university, college or technical institute. Have any of the individuals working for your company graduated from **Alberta's learning system** within the last two years?

1 – Yes **GO TO Q.5E**
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

2E. Within the last 2 years, have you been looking to hire...
READ AND ROTATE

a) **high school diploma only** graduates

1 – Yes
2 – No **GO TO Q.5 IF A - D**
9 – DK/NA **GO TO Q.5 IF A – D**

Programmers Note: If there is a combination of No or DK/NA between all five questions go to Q.5

b) **degree** graduates
c) **diploma** graduates
d) **certificate** graduates
e) **apprenticeship** graduates

3E. What position(s)/occupations(s) were you looking to hire graduates for? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

_____
_____
_____

4E. Why didn't you hire recent **Albertan** graduates for these positions/occupations? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

_____
_____
_____

DO NOT ASK ABOUT SPECIFIC GRADS IF EMPLOYER DOES NOT HAVE ANY GRAD OF THAT TYPE IN C ON PAGE 2 (C=2,98,or 99) DO NOT INCLUDE LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL

5E. Now, I would like to ask questions regarding your opinions of graduates from Alberta's learning system in general. Using a scale from one to four, where one is "very satisfied" and four is "very dissatisfied", please rate to what extent you are satisfied with the following:

1 – Very Satisfied 2 – Satisfied 3 –Dissatisfied –4 Very dissatisfied 9 – DK/NA

a) That graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge.

Programmers Note: List only those graduate types who have been given in C, except for Less than high school.

For:
i) High School Diploma only graduates
ii) Degree graduates
iii) Diploma graduates
iv) Certificate graduates
v) Apprenticeship graduates

b) That graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work.
c) That graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self confidence and the ability to access learning opportunities.

6E. Has your organisation provided assistance (for example - paying tuition, granting leave of absence, providing time off) to employees for education or training in Alberta's learning system in the last two years?

1 – Yes
2 – No **GO TO Q.1S**
9 – DK/NA **GO TO Q.1S**

7E. In what ways has your organisation provided this assistance?
a) Paid tuition

1 – Yes
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

b) Allowed leave of absence
c) Provided time off during the working day
d) Paid time off for specific course work
e) Other (specify)_____

ASK SECTION S ONLY OF EMPLOYERS OF GRADUATES IN THE LAST 2 YEARS
If 1E = NO on page 2 SKIP TO SECTION F on page 7.

SECTION S.

1S. Thinking about the recent graduates from Alberta's learning system you have working for your company please rate your OVERALL level of satisfaction with their skills and quality of work. Using a scale from one to four, where one is "very satisfied" and four is "very dissatisfied" what is your overall level of satisfaction?

1 – Very satisfied
2 – Satisfied
3 – Dissatisfied
4 – Very dissatisfied
9 – DK/NA

2S. Approximately how many of your current staff members have graduated from **Alberta's learning system** within the last two years with … If unsure, Ask for best approximation.

a) **high school diploma only**

I__I__I number of employees
DK/NA

Interviewer's Note: We are interested in the best approximation that the respondent can provide. If they are unable to give an approximation select DK/NA

b) **a degree**
c) **a diploma**
d) **a certificate**
e) **a journeyman's certificate**

3S. Where are these graduates working? **ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES**
READ ALL
1 – At this location
2 – In a field office (specify location)_____
3 – Other (specify)_____
9 – DK/NA

4S. I would now like to ask some specific questions about these recent graduates that your organisation has hired. Would you be the best person to answer these questions or should I be talking to someone else, such as an immediate supervisor?

1 – Same person **GO TO Q.7S on page 6**
2 – Different person/ supervisor(s)

5S. May I please have the name, phone number and department of the individual(s), so I may speak with him/her directly? Is there anyone else we might contact?

Name	Phone #

GO TO SECTION F on page 7

Programmers Note: Need to be able to record at least 3 names and numbers and any comments the interviewer believes to be helpful for the next contact attempt.

NOTE: Q.6S IS PART OF SECTION Sa on page 8 – IT IS NOT MISSING.

SECTION S CONTINUED

I would now like to ask you some specific questions about these recent graduates ***of Alberta's learning system****. I have a short set of questions for each type of recent graduate you have on staff.*

7S. I will read various types of skills and personal qualities that graduates may be expected to have. Please rate the following skills of these graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "very satisfied" and 4 is "very dissatisfied". **READ AND ROTATE**

1 – Very Satisfied 2 – Satisfied 3 –Dissatisfied –4 Very dissatisfied 9 – DK/NA

a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing.

Programmers Note: List only those graduate types who have been given in 2S on page 4

For:

i) High School Diploma only graduates
ii) Degree graduates
iii) Diploma graduates
iv) Certificate graduates
v) Apprenticeship graduates

b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas.
c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job.
d) The ability to think and solve problems.
e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours.
f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions.
g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team.
h) The ability to learn continuously.
i) The ability to work safely.
j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal.
k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks.

8S. Can you think of any particular skills/ abilities that are missing from recent graduates? **ACCEPT <u>ALL</u> ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

_____

_____

_____

DK/NA

9S. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Rate the following statements regarding your graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "Strongly agree" and 4 is "Strongly disagree". **READ AND ROTATE**

Alberta's learning system responds to the needs of my company by:

1 – Strongly agree 2 – Somewhat agree 3 –Somewhat disagree –4 Strongly disagree 9 – DK/NA

a) providing an adequate supply of graduates

Programmers Note: List only those graduate types who have been given in 2S on page 4.

With:

i) a high school diploma only
ii) a degree
iii) a diploma
iv) a certificate
v) apprenticeship certification

b) providing appropriate skills for graduates

SECTION F

Programmers Note: If Q1E=NO ask about graduates. If Q.1E=YES ask about "recent" graduates.

1F. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about (**recent**) graduates of Alberta's learning system?

_____

_____

_____

9 - DK/NA

G. What is your business postal code? **IF RESPONDENT IS RELUCTANT TO GIVE ENTIRE POSTAL CODE, ASK FOR FIRST THREE DIGITS.**

I __I__I__I I__I__I__I

And just to check that I've dialled the right number is this _____?
If incorrect number, ASK FOR ACTUAL NUMBER AND RECORD_____

Note geographic location division

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

NOTE CITY AREA

1 Edmonton
2 Calgary
3 Wood Buffalo/ Ft. McMurray
4 Grande Prairie
5 Lethbridge
6 Medicine Hat
7 Red Deer
8 Lloydminster
9 Wetaskiwin
10 Camrose
11 Grand Centre
12 North Other - Including St. Paul, Westlock, Barrhead, Morinville, Slave lake, Begreville Lac La Biche
13 Central Other Including Rocky Mountain House, Sundre, Innisfail, Stettler, Lacombe, Drumheller, Wainwright
14 South other Including Banff, Brooks, Claresholm, Fort MacLeod, Cardston, Taber, High River

If we have any further questions, may we call you back?

1 Yes
2 No

These are all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your participation.

IF DIFFERENT PERSON/ SUPERVISOR(S) IN 4S on page 5 ASK...
You indicated that there would be a supervisor who will be the best person to answer questions about recent Alberta graduates that your organisation has hired. Would you please be able to transfer me to the supervisor now?

1 – Yes Thank you. **GO TO SECTION Sa**
2 - No That's not a problem, please tell him/her that they can expect a call from us shortly **GO TO CALLBACK PAGE**

ASK SECTION Sa ONLY OF SUPERVISORS

SECTION Sa - Consists of New Contact Introduction 6S - 9S

NEW CONTACT

Hi, my name is _____ I am calling on behalf of Alberta Learning – a provincial government department overseeing all levels of education in the province (Education services for K-12, post-secondary, and industry/apprenticeship training). I work for Environics Research Group, a research company in Calgary. We've been conducting part of this study with _(Insert name from DASH Pg 105)__ from your company and they gave us your name suggesting you'd be able to help us. I have a few questions about your opinions of recent degree, diploma, certificate, apprenticeship and high school graduates your organisation has hired. The questions should take only a few minutes. Is this a convenient time to talk to you?

1 – Yes **CONTINUE**
2 – No **ARRANGE CONVENIENT CALLBACK/ REINTRODUCE YOURSELF IF NECESSARY**

Recent graduates are individuals who have graduated within the last two years. Your participation is voluntary and all information will be held in strict confidence and is protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

ASK QUESTIONS 6S – 9S

6S. The following questions refer to graduates from **Alberta's learning system**. Are you able to respond to questions about the following types of graduates?

Programmers Note: List only those graduate types who have been given in 2S on page 4.

a) High School Diploma only graduates

1- Yes
2- No
9 – DK/NA

b) Degree graduates
c) Diploma graduates
d) Certificate graduates
e) Apprenticeship graduates

Programmers Note: If No or DK/NA to all of the graduate types asked in this question Thank and Terminate. Go to call back page from question 5S and contact next name on list until list is exhausted or we can get past this question.

If possible consider the following:
If we cannot contact any supervisors to complete this portion of the survey we will phone the HR person back to see if anyone else can complete the survey for us.

7S. I will read various types of skills and personal qualities that graduates may be expected to have. Please rate the following skills of these graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "very satisfied" and 4 is "very dissatisfied". **READ AND ROTATE**

1 – Very Satisfied 2 – Satisfied 3 –Dissatisfied –4 Very dissatisfied 9 – DK/NA

a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing.

Programmers Note: List only those graduate types who have been given in 6S on page 8

For:
- i) High School Diploma only graduates
- ii) Degree graduates
- iii) Diploma graduates
- iv) Certificate graduates
- v) Apprenticeship graduates

b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas.
c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job.
d) The ability to think and solve problems.
e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours.
f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions.
g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team.
h) The ability to learn continuously.
i) The ability to work safely.
j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal.
k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks.

8S. Can you think of any particular skills/ abilities that are missing from recent graduates? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

_____

_____

_____

DK/NA

9S. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Rate the following statements regarding your graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "Strongly agree" and 4 is "Strongly disagree". **READ AND ROTATE**

Alberta's learning system responds to the needs of my company by:

1 – Strongly agree 2 – Somewhat agree 3 –Somewhat disagree –4 Strongly disagree 9 – DK/NA

a) providing an adequate supply of graduates

Programmers Note: List only those graduate types who have been given in 6S on page 8.

With:
- i) a high school diploma only
- ii) a degree
- iii) a diploma
- iv) a certificate
- v) a journeyman's certificate

b) providing appropriate skills for graduates

IF SUPERVISOR HAS COMPLETED SECTION Sa ASK...
If we have any further questions, may we call you back?
1 Yes
2 No

These are all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your participation.